



Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus

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**The Battle for the True Self**  
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## **The Battle for the True Self**

**Everyone stand, hold up your Bible...**

*God can move mountains in my life  
I will build up my faith with God's Holy Word  
I will come alive in the power of the Holy Spirit  
With Jesus, nothing will be impossible*

**Matthew 3:16-17**

*<sup>16</sup> As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

**Beloved: The True Self**

**It means you are adored, much loved, cherished, treasured, prized, highly regarded, admired, esteemed, revered, venerated.**

- Before Jesus could launch out on his mission, the Father affirmed Him as His precious beloved Son.
- Many of you have never known or experienced your belovedness. You have never felt the feeling of being adored, cherished and treasured.
- Many of you see yourself through the eyes of others who have placed your value in your figure, your sex appeal and your achievements.
- But Jesus views you so differently.

**The Battle with the False Self—the great imposter, the robber baron of our souls.**

**Matthew 4:1**

*<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

- We are told in Scripture that Jesus was ***“in all ways tempted like we are, yet without sin” (Hebrew 4:15)***
- Jesus is led into the wilderness, after being filled with the Spirit, to be tempted by Satan, to prove His deity.
  - This is not the lush wooded wilderness of Colorado, but rather the barren, rocky and rough, hot and dry wilderness.
  - East of Jerusalem, the Judean wilderness.
  - It is the wilderness of our soul—something many of you know about—the place of depression, despair and betrayal. We feel utterly alone.
  - It is in the wilderness that we are most vulnerable. It is in our despair, depression, loneliness and betrayal that demons are most at work.
  - This is often where we experience our greatest shame. The place of our deepest loneliness.
- The first thing we notice in our passage is that there is a REAL DEVIL.
- Satan is real. I do not have time to go into the details of Who he is and What he does; suffice to say I have spoken in depth on this in my “Spiritual Warfare” messages. But here is what we know:
  - Satan or Lucifer, was once a beautiful arch angel (Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 14) and chose to rebel against God and was cast to the earth.
  - Satan took 1/3 of the heavenly angels with him and these are demons on the earth.
  - They tempt us into evil and sin. They shackle and build bondages in our life.
  - Jesus said that “Satan comes only to steal, kill, and destroy” This is his job description.

- In the temptation of Christ, we see the 3 major ways Satan and his demons tempt us.

## **Satan's 3 Great Temptations—The False Self**

- All temptations from Satan and demons are an appeal to three areas .
- The Apostle John captures the rubric from which all temptations flow:

***<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (1John 2:15-17)***

This is “Satan’s Great Tool Kit” revealed.

- This is the False Love, the False Self, tempting us away from the True Self, the Real You.
- The False Self is living separated from God’s presence and power. This is the insecure self always trying to make a place for itself and hiding behind the posing and pretense of our shame. This is the self that must build it’s own cocoon of protection against hurt because of the need to promote and maintain an image.
- Satan has only has 3 tools to keep us locked up in our False Self:
  1. Lust of the flesh
  2. Lust of the eyes
  3. Pride of Life
- These are the primal and universal temptations of all persons.
- Satan used the same 3 temptations with Eve and Adam in the Garden:

1. Lust of the flesh—eat the fruit.
2. Lust of the Eyes—when Eve saw that it looked good, pleasant to the eyes.
3. Pride of life—you can be like God.

## **The First “False Self” Temptation: “Be Cool” (Lust of the Flesh)**

### **Matthew 4:1-3**

***<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”***

- Satisfy your Lusts by being Relevant, Cool and Successful your way.
- Notice the order of the temptation. After 40 days of fasting in the wilderness; the wilderness of Quarantana, according to tradition, a bare desolate mount near Jericho.
- When He is most vulnerable, most tired and most hungry.
- Demons are opportunists. They learned it from their Master, Satan.
- Satisfy your wants or needs your way! Be cool. Fit in. The False Self speaks into your heart—follow your desires, your lusts to be popular, successful and acquiesce to the culture.
- The False Self tells you what it immediately wants and seldom knows what it really needs. You can be a very popular and successful person when you operate at this level, and you will easily think very well of yourself.
- That is why Jesus has to face that temptation first, to move us beyond what we first want, to what we really need. In refusing to be immediately relevant, in refusing to respond to people’s immediate requests, Jesus says, Go deeper.

#### **Matthew 4:4**

***<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”***

- What you are longing for is YOU! The Authentic YOU! Christ in you.
- Listening to His voice from His Word: you are beloved, you are a kingdom of priests and kings.
- The True Self and the True Kingdom Vocation (Genesis 1:26-28)
- ***<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” <sup>27</sup> So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. <sup>28</sup> Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”***
- This is what the **True Self** does: **1)** in Christ you can be fruitful; **2)** in Christ you can multiply; **3)** in Christ you can have dominion
- Satan wanted to derail Jesus from His mission before it even got started. Satan wants to derail you too!

#### **The Second “False Self” Temptation: “Be Amazing” (Lust of the Eyes)**

#### **Matthew 4:5-7**

***<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup> “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ ” <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”***

- It is the only time in the Bible where the devil quotes Scripture. Holy words can be used for evil purposes.
- The Temptation of the False Self is to do something spectacular; be amazing .
- The Show Off! This is one of the great temptations today on Facebook, Instagram, snap chat, etc. Be Spectacular.
- Notice that Satan took Jesus to the Pinnacle of the Temple—it can be in the religious, Christian world too; have the biggest church, the most exciting ministry. The False Self loves the attention it brings and the acclaim.
- The True Self says:
  - YOU ARE BELOVED! MY FAVOR RESTS ON YOU!
- Ladies, YOU ARE BELOVED! THE FAVOR OF JESUS RESTS ON YOU! That is who you are. This is the True Self, True Identity. This is how we become wholehearted.
  - No matter what you look like.
  - No matter what your parents said.
  - No matter what your boss says.
  - No matter what people think about you.
  - No matter what you have or do not have.
  - No matter who is talking about you behind your back.
  - This is who you are! Do not miss this.
  - The Lord says to you: “You are my beloved daughter. My favor rests on you.”
- Even before you were born, you were beloved. What was said of Jesus is true of you.
- We are Beloved! God’s Favor rests on us!

**You must hear what God says about you...**

***“I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. Jeremiah 31:3***

***I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Isaiah 49:16***

***My frame was not hidden from You,  
When I was made in secret,  
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.  
16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.  
And in Your book they all were written,  
The days fashioned for me,  
When as yet there were none of them.  
17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!  
Psalm 139***

***Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.  
Isaiah 43:1***

**The Third “False Self” Temptation: “Be Powerful” (Pride of Life)**

**Matthew 4:8-9**

***8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”***

- Satan is saying “bow down before the power centers of this world.”
- The False Self says, if you will seek power, you will get glory.
- Money, Sex and Power! The shiny attractions of the American Dream.
- Idols. These False Self Temptations can become idols in our life. Idolatry and slavery are closely associated throughout scripture.
- Again, Jesus gives us the True Self...

## Matthew 4:10-11

***<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” <sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.***

- The True Self worships God! Worship is freedom; worship breaks bondages off our heart.
- Worship is gazing upon Christ in all that we do.
- **Worship as intimacy with God as Beloved.**
- This is truly when we are becoming wholehearted! You will lift your pain, you will lift your rejection; you will lift your looks up to Christ and be able to say “But I am Beloved! This is my new identity.”
- I know whose I am. I know who I am. I am beloved. Not based on my looks, how much I do, how much I have or what people say about me. No, I know that is no longer my identity. My new identity is God’s everlasting, unchanging, unwavering, constant love for me.
- The voice that calls you beloved is the voice of the Great Commandment: ***“Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbor as yourself”***
  - Understand “love yourself” is in there. This voice is saying you CAN love Me with all your heart because you are beloved!
  - God loves you with all HIS heart, soul, mind and strength and you can know that the voice that calls you beloved calls you into the Great Command.
  - **John 15:12 “Love one another because God loved you first”**
  - You must claim the Great Love.
  - Many of you were loved but not loved well. Many of you have people who care for us but they also need us. Some of those

closest to us, have also hurt us the most. How do we deal with this?

**Stand and take the Power Position (hands on hips) and say:**

**“I am Beloved. I have unshakable Confidence in Christ”**